

ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY



NEWS

FALL 2007

Talkin' Trash

News from MDOT
Director Kirk Steudle



Many thanks for your help in cleaning Michigan highways! Personal involvement has proven to be the best way to keep our roadsides clean. The Adopt-A-Highway program costs very little for individual groups and families to get involved, and in return for your efforts, you gain public recognition and the sincere thanks of everyone who passes you on the highway.

Ever heard a car's horn honk, and seen a friendly wave from a passer-by? I'm sure you have! We all appreciate your hard work and dedication. Your efforts helped us clean about 5,800 miles of roadway in 2007. And although we're still tallying the results...this year's trash collection so far has yielded about 60,000 bags.

We're proud that Adopt-A-Highway has an excellent safety record. And next year, to keep you safer than ever, we are switching to a more visible, bright yellow safety vest with reflective stripes. The new vest is part of a nationwide initiative and required by the Federal Highway Administration in 2008. The new safety vest will be available at all of the supply locations in the spring. So next year, be sure to wear your new safety vest, watch our new safety video (a great refresher course), and talk up safety. At MDOT, we like to say, "Safety - there's no substitute. Talk it up."

From our MDOT family to yours - thank you!

Kirk Steudle, MDOT Director

New safety vest and safety video coming in 2008

A new Federal Highway Administration rule requires everyone working in the highway right-of-way (including Adopt-A-Highway volunteers) to wear a high visibility safety vest. The new vests are a yellow-green color with reflective tape. They are much more visible than the orange vests and...here's good news...machine washable!

MDOT will furnish new vests to all Adopt-A-Highway volunteers. The vests will be available at all Adopt-A-Highway supply locations in the spring. Please be sure to pick up new ones before participating in the 2008 pickups.

We have also created a new safety video and will mail each group a DVD copy in the spring 2008. (VHS copies will be available upon request.)

2008 Pick-up Dates!

Spring April 21 - 27
Summer July 12 - 20
Fall September 13 - 21



✓ Pickup and Safety Forms Reminder

Be sure to submit your Safety Meeting Attendance forms annually and Litter Pickup Report forms after each pickup. It is a requirement of the program to have both forms on file in order to earn your certificate.

✓ If You Move, or Your Contact Person Changes

Be sure to note this info on your pickup report form; or e-mail Tim Jones, statewide Adopt coordinator (jonestim@michigan.gov); or call your local coordinator. Whatever your method, please let us know.

Web site at www.michigan.gov/adoptahighway

Meet your Adopt coordinator

Anna's army of Adopt-A-Highway volunteers scour the roadsides

As the Adopt-A-Highway coordinator for MDOT's nine-county Southwest Region, Anna Roberts has the enthusiasm it takes to assist the area's 326 volunteer groups.

"Our Adopt program contributes immensely to Michigan's natural beauty," said Anna. "With help from about 3,400 volunteers, we keep our roadsides looking good. Our volunteers picked up 6,304 bags of trash along 695 miles of highway in 2007. I really enjoy working on a program that makes a major contribution to our environment."

A benefit of the roadside cleanup program is having many volunteers with their eyes trained to watch the roadway. Often, Anna is contacted in regard to missing mile marker signs or vegetation that needs grooming. She forwards the information to the region's maintenance employees for attention.



"I feel really motivated by how important the Adopt-A-Highway program is to many of our groups. Plus, during the three annual pickups, the presence of the volunteers on our roadsides encourages motorists to keep their trash under control and inside their vehicles," she said.

Anna began a unique program in her region with area landfill companies who willingly accept Adopt-A-Highway trash at no charge to the state. In the true spirit of partnership, five landfill companies open their gates during Adopt pickup weeks, saving taxpayer dollars.

"Anna's initiative to seek out landfill support of this program not only saves money, it creates valued partnerships that exemplify our department's mission," said Bobbi Welke, Southwest Region engineer.

In recognition of their efforts, the companies receive an Adopt sign for their property and statewide recognition through communications to the media. The participating companies are Republic Waste, plus two of their subsidiaries, Cork Street Transfer Station, and Coldwater Transfer Station; C&C Landfill in Turkeyville; Westside Landfill in Three Rivers; and Orchard Hill Landfill in Watervliet.

In addition to her Adopt-A-Highway responsibilities, Anna is also the receptionist for the busy Southwest Region, which includes three transportation service centers, and 12 maintenance garages. She directs customers, handles complaints, pays bills, and assists in processing transport permits. As a five-year veteran of the department, she's just the kind of caring employee the Adopt-A-Highway program needs.

News from the Roadside

From Marquette to Monroe – and most points in-between – Adopt-A-Highway crews are busy everywhere in Michigan. Thanks for sending your photos and news. Digital photos must be jpg format (no larger than 640x480 pixels). Please send us an e-mail to MDOT-adoptahighway@michigan.gov.

Traverse Bay Twilight Club of Traverse City adopted two miles of M-72 this year. Members worked in the cold in April and rain in September, but the July cleanup was a beautiful summer day. Club members were excited to pitch in to keep the area cleared of trash for all the special visitors during the National Governor's Conference. Attendees stayed at the Grand Traverse Resort (which overlooks their stretch of highway). ✓ *Check out photo on Web!*

▼ **The Drummond Island Lions Club** gets together to pick up trash on M-134, the only state highway on this picturesque island.



► **Henry Ford Hospital Lakeside Satellite** has always focused on customer service. While looking for a community service project in their neighborhood, Adopt-A-Highway was the perfect solution. More than 30 volunteers were active at this first pickup in April. Coordinator Barbara Gettemy said, "It was a fun morning, with great weather, donuts and juice, prizes, HFH baseball caps, and lots of laughs and willing photographers."



◀ **Holland Board of Public Works** has great fun on their section of US-31. They found a Hope College professor's wallet (dutifully returned to the grateful owner), rewarded one lucky winner with an Earth Day T-shirt, and hid "prize" certificates for their participants.

Summit Church of Christ in Ludington wrote that during their pickup on Pere Marquette Highway, one of the workers called out to a big orange cat in an adjoining field and the crew petted him. They wrote, "Moments later, a very happy little boy hopped out of a van at the roadside. He was thrilled to find his lost cat. It made us all feel good to have a part in reuniting a precious family pet with its owner."

▼ **Good Shepherd Lutheran Church** in Holland has been doing "clean-up ministry" for a number of years and they view it as an opportunity to have fun, do outreach and community service all at the same time. "It is one example of living our vision," they wrote.



The **Big Bear Sportsmen's Club** of Kaleva picked Tuesday, September 11 for their fall cleanup. They clear trash from US-31 in Manistee County and Club Secretary Donna Rector reported that they always have a fun evening. ✓ *Check out photo on Web!*

Campus Dining at Central Michigan University has been involved in a variety of community service-type projects, such as Adopt-A-Family, Toys for Tots, Big Brothers Big Sisters. So it seemed a natural to add one more: Adopt-A-Highway along M-20 in Isabella County. ✓ *Check out photo on Web!*

It was a chilly, gloomy day in April when **Great Lakes Recycling** volunteers pitched in to clean up their two-mile section of Groesbeck Highway (M-97) in Roseville. But many hands helped make the work go faster on their first cleanup of the season. ✓ *Check out photo on Web!*

▼ The Adopt-A-Highway program attracts many people who wish to honor a loved one. The family and friends of **Donald Yates** clean M-60 in Niles. In memory of **Dallas Root and Laurie Rowed**, friends and family pick up trash along M-42 in Manton.



There's more!
See more photos and group stories online at
www.michigan.gov/adoptahighway



**MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT
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The ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY NEWS is authorized by the transportation director to provide adopting group coordinators with timely, brief and accurate accounts of safety issues and other program policies of the department that impact the Adopt-A-Highway program. It is published by the Michigan Department of Transportation Office of Communications in accordance with Executive Directive 2007-1. Comments, questions and news ideas are welcomed. Contact Janet Foran, editor, at 517-335-7176; E-mail: foranj@michigan.gov; or write to: MDOT Office of Communications, P.O. Box 30050, Lansing, MI 48909. Requests for this information in an alternative format may be made through the Office of Communications or by TDD/TTY through the Michigan Relay Center at 800-649-3777.

It takes no one special to litter, but
someone very special to clean it up!

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Providing the highest quality integrated transportation services for economic benefit and improved quality of life.

Printed by DMB - 3,200 copies printed at \$0.34 ea. for a total cost of \$1,083.30 Design - MDOT Graphic Design graphics/adopt a highway/newletter/Fall_Winter07/Fall07.indd

